

JACOB JOHNSON HOUSE
(Levin Bates House)
7300 Bardstown Road
Louisville
Jefferson County
Kentucky

HABS NO.KY-179

HABS
KY
56-LOUVI,
31-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Department of the Interior
Southeast Region
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HABS
KY
56-LOUVI,
31-

Historic American Buildings Survey
Jacob Johnson House (Levin Bates House)

Location: 7300 Bardstown Road
Louisville, Kentucky

Present Owner: Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

Present Occupant: Unoccupied

Significance: The Levin Bates House is a fine example of a transitional Federal to Greek Revival style structure, as expressed in rural Jefferson County, Kentucky. It is one of few center passage, I-houses in the Fern Creek area of the county, or along Bardstown Road, an historic turnpike and important transportation route. The Levin Bates House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. The Levin Bates House was constructed c. 1842,
2. No architect
3. See title search on page 11.
4. Jacob Johnson was the original owner/builder
5. The structure was originally conceived as a two-story, center passage plan house, with a one and one-half story, one room ell.
6. The first major addition to the house, was a one story, one room, kitchen unit attached to the west (rear) wall of the main ell. This addition was probably constructed during the middle part of the 19th century. Another later 19th century addition consists of a one story, frame, shed style porch in the north corner of the ell and main block. This porch was enclosed with weatherboard during the 20th century.

Two other major 20th century alterations to the house include a brick shed roofed, one-room brick addition, and a brick and frame porch, both constructed along the south wall of the rear ell.

B. Historical Context:

Ownership of the property on which the Levin Bates House stands, can be traced to James Guthrie. James Guthrie was born in 1749 in Delaware, and served in the Revolutionary War before coming to Kentucky in 1780. He gained the title to 1199 acres in the Fern Creek area of Jefferson County. According to an existant deed of partition, the Guthrie holdings were divided among various family heirs in 1842, and the parcel which now contains the Levin Bates House was deeded to Sarah Guthrie, James' youngest daughter.

Born in 1805, Sarah Guthrie married Jacob Johnson in 1833. Jacob was born in Indiana in 1809, a farmer and blacksmith by trade. Sarah and Jacob Johnson built the present house and were owners of the "J. Johnson Nursery" when the 1858 Jefferson County Atlas was published. Family tradition dates the construction of the house in 1851, but the architectural style, and mode of construction suggests a somewhat earlier date of 1840's. It is possible that the construction took place over a twenty year period, with the initial phase during the first half of the 19th century.

Jacob Johnson's main income was realized through his involvement in truck farming. He owned a total of 225 acres of improved and unimproved land which he acquired through inheritance and purchase.

Jacob and Sarah Johnson's youngest daughter Sarah Margaret (1848-1922) married Levin T. Bates in 1868 and they received ownership of the property after her father's death in 1875. The 1879 Atlas of Jefferson County, and Oldham Counties, Kentucky identified L. Bates as the owner of the property.

Little is known of the economic activity or physical composition of the Bates farm during the 1870's or 1880's, as no census records for those years were located. It is known however, that all the outbuildings constructed by Jacob Johnson were still extant during the time the property was occupied by the Bates family. These include a log cabin, chicken coop, hog pen, smoke house, and log barn. Archaeological investigations revealed that Levin Bates replaced the log barn with a larger frame barn.

After her husband's death Sarah Guthrie lived until 1888, presumably residing with her youngest daughter and son-in-law. Sarah Margaret Bates died in 1922 and Levin Bates passed away in 1935. It was at that time ownership of the farm passed out of family hands.

At this time the property was subdivided, sold to various individuals and ceased to operate as a cohesive family-run unit. The house, and thirty acres surrounding it were eventually purchased by Edward and Marge Harding. It was during the Harding ownership that most of the alterations to the property took place. The property remained in their hands until purchased by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet in 1984.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

The Levin Bates House is a two-story, single pile, brick I-house structure, with a graduated one and one-half to one story brick ell. It is basically vernacular in style with transitional late Federal to Greek Revival details.

1. Architectural Character:

Although the exact date of construction is not known, the architectural detailing suggests the house was built during the second quarter of the 19th century. The basic form of the Levin Bates House is Federal, while the entrance element and interior woodwork display Greek Revival tendencies.

2. Condition of Fabric:

Although the structure has been unused for a short while, it is still very sound. Few cracks are evident in the brickwork in either the main block or ell, and the roof is without major faults.

Some vandalism has occurred during the time the house has been empty. All of the mantle pieces have been removed with the exception of one (first floor, north room, main block). The door handle and lock have been taken from the main entrance, and the

bannister and hand rail from the main staircase are no longer intact.

However, the flooring and interior walls are sound, and without holes or cracks.

B. Description of Interior:

1. Overall dimensions:

2132.87 square feet (including additions and porches).
See measured floor plans, pages 13-14.

2. Foundations:

The main block and ell sit on a rough cut stone block foundation. In the main block and original ell, this foundation is part of a full stone basement measuring approximately seven feet in depth. Access to the basement is gained through an entrance on the southwest corner of the main block. It consists of stone steps flanking sloping stone walls. The opening itself is capped by a jack arch in brick.

3. Walls:

The main block and ell are laid in five to seven course common bond brick work. The 20th century have no bonding pattern, laid with stretchers only. The late 19th century frame porch is covered with sawn weatherboard.

4. Structural System:

The front porch, which shelters the main entrance, has been altered somewhat by the replacement of original wood supporting members with wrought iron supports, and iron bannistered railing. No documentation defines whether the supports were columns or wood piers. The wood cornice tends to date the porch as a 19th century element.

The 19th century porch on the north side of the ell was probably enclosed with weatherboard during the late 19th or early 20th century. The original tongue and groove ceiling is extant.

5. Chimneys:

The end chimneys in the main block are flush with the exterior walls. They are adorned with a single row of projecting bricks just below the cap. One square chimney serves both rooms in the ell. As the ell was constructed in two separate units, it is probable that the original chimney was reconstructed to serve the kitchen unit also.

6. Openings:

- a. The main entrance element is a strongly Greek Revival feature with a four panel door, flanked by engaged wood piers and segmented sidelights. Recessed paneled aprons support the sidelights. All of these details are capped by a simple lintel and segmented transom. A large cornice head molding strip tops the entire entrance.

All the entrances to the main block and original ell are capped by splayed jack arches. The openings in the kitchen unit are topped by segmented arches.

- b. The window openings also display jack arches and wood sills. There are 6/6 lights in the openings and on the main facade, they are flanked by wood shutters.

Pairs of small window openings, with no arches, flank the chimneys in the main block and original ell.

7. Roof:

- a. A simple standing seam, gable roof caps both the main block and ell. A shed style roof covers the additions which flank the original ell. The 20th century addition on the south wall of the kitchen unit has a slightly sloping roof covered in asbestos siding.

- b. The main block displays a simple, two row corbeled brick cornice. No corbeling adorns the cornice of the ell. Both the original segment and the kitchen unit display a simple wood cornice board only. The enclosed frame porch (north side, ell) boasts a box cornice.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

Please see attached measured drawings on pages 13-14.

- a. The first floor of the main block consists of a main entrance hall flanked by two relatively square rooms. The hall measures approximately 8 by 18 feet and supports the main staircase located along the north wall. The stair is without bannisters and hand railing, which have been removed.

The two flanking rooms are basically identical. They measure approximately 15 x 19 and are each served by a single fireplace opening. The fireplaces are flanked by shallow cupboards which appear to be original. One closet, in the northwest corner of the south parlor, is a new addition.

The hall leads into the main room of the original ell, which measures about 17 x 17 feet. It is also served by a chimney, which also opens into the kitchen unit beyond. A unit of new shelving was installed along the south wall of the first room in the ell. Abutting the south wall of this room is a brick 20th century kitchen and bath unit. To the north is the 19th century, enclosed frame porch.

The 19th century kitchen unit was attached to the west wall of the original ell. It shares a chimney with the previously mentioned room. Directly south of the kitchen is another separate 20th century brick addition.

- b. The second floor is basically a mirror image of the first with the exception of the kitchen unit. It consists of the main stair hall flanked by two rooms to the north and south. Directly west, off the stair landing, is the second level of the ell. A portion of the second floor main hall has been enclosed to form a bathroom.

2. Stairways:

The stair in the main hall provides the only access to the second level. It is a simple unadorned element, and the original bannistered hand railing has been removed.

3. Walls and Ceilings:

The interior wall covering is plaster and is basically intact throughout the structure, with few cracks. In some areas, there are some layers of wallpaper, and it appears that efforts were being made to remove those. The ceilings are also plaster, and free from inclusions.

4. Openings:

The interior door openings are framed with a simple molding, similar to that of the baseboard. This trim consists of a plain board capped by a recessed, then projecting molding strip. The entry doors themselves are four panel, raised cross piece, type. The exception to this appears in the kitchen, which displays vertical board and batten type doors.

Shallow cupboards flank the mantles in the main block, displaying the same molding as do the other doors. Access is gained to the interior through double, raised panel doors, which open from the center.

The interior main entrance element is a mirror image of the exterior, with segmented transom, sidelights and paneled aprons. A simple lintel and side pieces separate these elements. The molding

surrounding the entrance is identical to that trimming the other interior openings.

The window openings are basically simple, with the same previously described trim as the doors.

5. Mantles:

The one extant mantle piece (north room, first floor, main block), although simple leans toward the Greek Revival in style. It consists of an unadorned frieze flanked by broad pilasters. These members support a plain, unbroken mantle shelf. The fireplace opening is approximately 2 1/2 to 3 feet deep. The hearth area has been covered with 20th century tile.

6. Mechanical equipment

- a. The structure has been centrally heated with a gas furnace located in the cellar. Floor vents had been placed throughout the house.
- b. The structure had been wired for electricity and outlets had been installed throughout the house.
- c. New plumbing facilities were installed in the brick addition on the south side of the original ell, and in the second floor hallway. A new kitchen and bath were located in the first floor addition. A second bath unit was located in the second floor hallway enclosure.

D. Site:

1. The Levin Bates House sits approximately 150 feet west of Bardstown Road in Southern Jefferson County. The house faces the east. The original entrance from the main road came from the southeast, but was changed over the years to a more direct route from the east. The house was given protection from the heavily traveled road by a large number of trees and heavy undergrowth in the front yard area. The same could be said for

the domestic areas to the south and west of the house. The only cleared area was located directly north of the structure. This may have been part of the cultivation area used by the family.

2. None of the original outbuildings are extant. Some of the buildings constructed by either the Johnson or Bates families included: a log cabin, log barn, a (later) frame barn, chicken coop, hog pen, and smoke house. Remnants of a hand dug well have also been located.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Bibliography:

Jefferson County Deed Books, County Clerk's Office, Jefferson County Courthouse, Louisville, Kentucky.

Beers and Lanagan, Atlas of Jefferson and Oldham Counties, Kentucky, 1879.

Commonwealth of Kentucky, Department of Transportation, Division of Environmental Analysis. Historic and Cultural Analysis, Jefferson Freeway, Levin Bates House, unpublished report, April 25, 1977.

Jeffries, Richard, and Nancy O'Malley. Research design and mitigation proposal report, Levin Bates House, unpublished report to the Kentucky Heritage Council, May 20, 1985.

Jefferson County Multiple Resource Nomination for the National Register of Historic Places. Prepared by the Jefferson County Office of Historic Preservation and Archives, August 9, 1979.

Prepared by: Jayne C. Henderson
Senior Historian
Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
July 3, 1985

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Jefferson Freeway Project envisions a thirty-four mile circumferential belt line to the south and east of Louisville, Kentucky. The freeway will extend from US 60-31W south of Louisville to US 42 slightly north and east of the city's boundary. The project will be a four-lane facility with provisions for ultimate upgrading to six lanes.

The Levin Bates House is located at 7300 Bardstown Road, approximately ten miles southwest of Louisville. The house sits at the proposed interchange of the Jefferson Freeway and Bardstown Road.

Title Search

Original and Subsequent Owners: Part IA3
Jefferson County Deed Books, County Clerks Office
Jefferson County Courthouse, Louisville, Kentucky

No recorded deeds of the transfer of the original land could be located. However, a deed of partition shows that James Guthrie was the original owner of the property. At his death in 1841 the property was divided among his children, with his youngest daughter, Sarah Guthrie Johnson, and her husband, Jacob Johnson, receiving 122 1/2 acres.

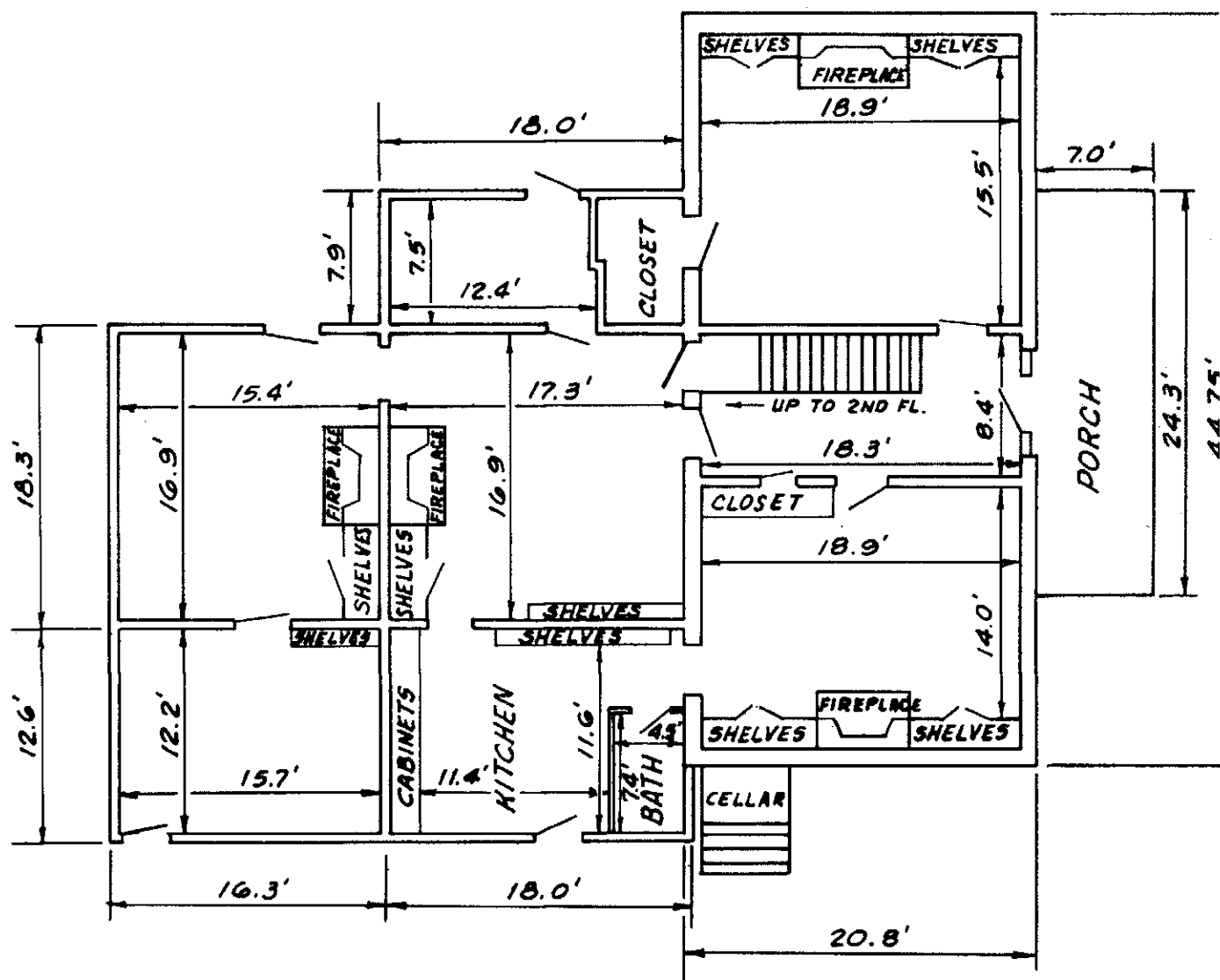
It appears that they build the present structure ca. 1842. Jacob died in 1875 and another deed of partition shows the house going to his youngest daughter, Sarah Margaret, and her husband, Levin T. Bates. This transaction was not recorded in the deed books, but subsequent purchases of land from other Johnson siblings were found.

- 1877 Deed, January 5, 1877 recorded in Volume 206, Page 395.
William and May R. Johnson, Jacob Johnson, and Moses Johnson to Levin T. Bates and Sarah M. Bates.
- Deed, January 20, 1877, recorded in Volume 206, Page 396.
Moses Johnson to Levin T. Bates.
- Deed, January 26, 1877, recorded Volume 206, Page 391.
Jacob Johnson to Levin T. Bates.
- 1936 Deed, August 17, 1936, recorded in Volume 1616, Page 175.
James H. Bates, trustee, to Watson G., and C. Willa Caudill.
- 1941 Deed, March 13, 1941, recorded in Volume 1776, Page 362.
Watson G. and C. Willa Caudill to Madge Caudill.
- 1953 Deed, November 13, 1953, recorded in Volume 3104, Page 329.
Madge Caudill to Edward and Madge Harding.
- 1983 Deed, February 7, 1983, recorded in Volume 5329, Page 734.
Edward H. Harding to Edward H. Harding, Jr., and Helen Harding.
- 1984 Deed, July 9, 1984, recorded in Volume 5445, Page 118.
Edward H. and Helen Harding to Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Washington, DC. 20243

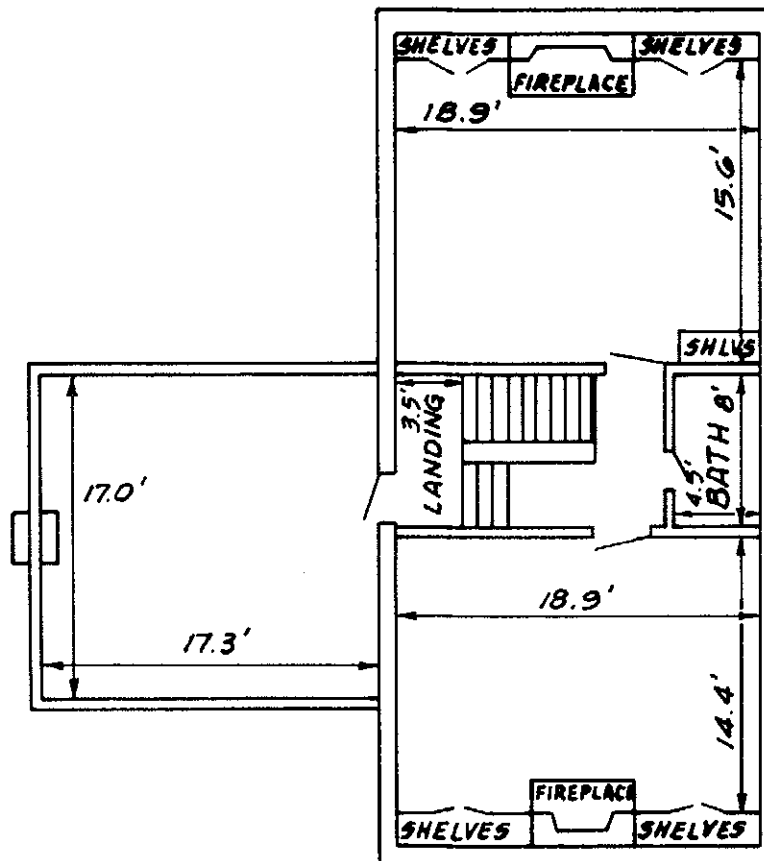
ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE Kentucky	COUNTY Jefferson	TOWN OR VICINITY Louisville
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) Jacob Johnson or Levin T. Bates House (Johnson was original owner)		HABS NO. KY-179
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 7300 Bardstown Road, Louisville, Kentucky		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) c. 1830-1850	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) The Levin Bates House is a fine example of a transitional Federal to Greek Revival style structure, as expressed in rural Jefferson County, Kentucky. It is one of few center passage, I-houses in the Fern Creek area of the county, or along Bardstown Road, an historic turnpike and important transportation route. The Levin Bates house was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Transitional late Federal to Greek Revival		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Hand laid masonry supported by cut stone basement and foundation. All interior framing is wood.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Two story, five bay, I-house form with graduated one and one-half to one story ell.		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE Red brick. Facing is laid in five to seven course common bond. The main elevations boast a corbeled brick cornice. All openings on the main block and ell are capped by jack arches. The main entrance element is Greek Revival in style.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) The main entrance surround is Greek Revival with lintels, side piers, transom and sidelights. The one remaining mantle piece is also Greek Revival.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES Late 19th century/a frame porch was added to the north side of original ell. Later enclosed with weather board. 20th century/two, one story brick additions on the south side of ell.		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Fair condition, beginning deterioration. The building has been vacant for two years. Plans for its removal to another site are eminent.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE Documentation for this structure was prepared by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Division of Environmental Analysis, in compliance with a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and Executive Order 11593.		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDE LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) -National Register of Historic Places; Jefferson County, Multiple Resources Nomination, 1979 -Jefferson County Office of Historic Preservation and Archives -University of Kentucky Office of Archaeology		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Jayne C. Henderson Senior Historian Division of Environmental Analysis Kentucky Transportation Cabinet		DATE July, 1985



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
OF THE
LEVIN BATES HOUSE
7300 BARDSTOWN RD.
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY





SECOND FLOOR PLAN
OF THE
LEVIN BATES HOUSE
7300 BARDSTOWN RD.
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

